General Assembly

Distr.: General
30 April 2010

Sixty-fourth session
Agenda item 70 (*a*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/64/L.43 and Add.1)*]

64/251. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, the annex to which contains the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, as well as all its resolutions on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development, and recalling the resolutions of the humanitarian segments of the substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the importance of the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Reaffirming the Hyogo Declaration,[1] the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters[2] and the common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future,[3] as adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005,

Noting with appreciation the holding of the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, in Geneva from 16 to 19 June 2009, taking note of the "2009 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction",[4] and looking forward to the forthcoming Hyogo Framework for Action midterm review,

Emphasizing that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory and in the facilitation of the work of humanitarian organizations in mitigating the consequences of natural disasters,

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[1] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1.

[2] Ibid., resolution 2.

[3] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, annex II.

[4] Available from www.unisdr.org.

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Emphasizing also the responsibility of all States to undertake disaster preparedness, response and early recovery efforts in order to minimize the impact of natural disasters, while recognizing the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected countries which may have limited capacities in this regard,

Expressing its deep concern at the increasing challenges to Member States and to the United Nations humanitarian response capacity to deal with the consequences of natural disasters, given the effects of global challenges, including the impact of climate change, the global financial and economic crisis, and the humanitarian implications of the global food crisis,

Also expressing its deep concern that rural and urban poor communities in the developing world are the hardest hit by the effects of increased disaster risk,

Acknowledging the impacts of rapid urbanization in the context of natural disasters and that urban disaster preparedness and responses require appropriate disaster risk reduction strategies, including in urban planning, early recovery strategies implemented from the initial stage of relief operations, as well as rehabilitation and development strategies,

Noting that local communities are the first responders in most disasters, underlining the critical role played by in-country capacities in disaster risk reduction, including preparedness, response and recovery, and acknowledging the need to support efforts of Member States to develop and enhance national and local capacities which are fundamental to improving the overall delivery of humanitarian assistance,

Recognizing the high numbers of persons affected by natural disasters, including in this respect internally displaced persons, and the need to address the humanitarian needs arising from internal displacement throughout the world owing to sudden-onset natural disasters,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all their phases, in particular in preparedness, response and the early recovery phase, and of strengthening the response capacity of countries affected by disaster,

Recognizing the progress made by the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) in its mission, encouraging Member States to provide all support necessary, on a voluntary basis, to UN-SPIDER, including financial support, to enable it to carry out its workplan for 2010–2011, and reiterating the importance of enhancing international coordination and cooperation at the global level in disaster management and emergency response through greater access to and use of space-based services for all countries and by facilitating capacity-building and institutional strengthening for disaster management, in particular in developing countries,

Noting with appreciation the important role played by Member States, including developing countries, that have granted necessary and continued generous assistance to countries and peoples stricken by natural disasters,

Recognizing the significant role played by national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, as part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in disaster preparedness and risk reduction, disaster response, rehabilitation and development,

Emphasizing the importance of addressing vulnerability and integrating risk reduction into all phases of natural disaster management, post-natural disaster recovery and development planning,

Recognizing that efforts to achieve economic growth, sustainable development and internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, can be adversely affected by natural disasters, and noting the positive contribution that those efforts can make in strengthening the resilience of populations to such disasters,

Emphasizing, in this context, the important role of development organizations in supporting national efforts to mitigate the consequences of natural disasters,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[5]

2. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively the long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters;

3. *Calls upon* States to fully implement the Hyogo Declaration[1] and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[2] in particular those commitments related to assistance for developing countries that are prone to natural disasters and for disaster-stricken States in the transition phase towards sustainable physical, social and economic recovery, for risk-reduction activities in post-disaster recovery and for rehabilitation processes;

4. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian and development actors to accelerate the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, emphasizes the promotion and strengthening of disaster preparedness activities at all levels, in particular in hazard-prone areas, and encourages them to increase funding and cooperation for disaster risk reduction activities, including disaster preparedness;

5. *Calls upon* all States to adopt, where required, and to continue to implement effectively, necessary legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of natural disasters and integrate disaster risk reduction strategies into development planning, and in this regard requests the international community to continue to assist developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition, as appropriate;

6. *Acknowledges* that global climate change, among other factors, contributes to the increase in intensity and frequency of natural disasters, which amplify natural disaster risk, and in this regard encourages Member States, as well as relevant regional and international organizations, in accordance with their specific mandates, to support adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and to strengthen disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including through the provision of technology and support for capacity-building in developing countries;

7. *Welcomes* the initiatives at the regional and national levels related to the implementation of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of

[5] A/64/331.

International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance adopted at the Thirtieth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 26 to 30 November 2007, and encourages Member States and, where applicable, regional organizations to take further steps to strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account the Guidelines, as appropriate;

8. *Also welcomes* the effective cooperation among the affected States, relevant bodies of the United Nations system, donor countries, regional and international financial institutions and, as appropriate, other relevant organizations, such as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and civil society, in the coordination and delivery of emergency relief, and stresses the need to continue such cooperation and delivery throughout relief operations and medium- and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, in a manner that reduces vulnerability to future natural hazards;

9. *Reiterates* the commitment to support, as a matter of priority, the efforts of countries, in particular developing countries, to strengthen their capacities at all levels in order to prepare for and respond rapidly to natural disasters and mitigate their impact;

10. *Urges* Member States to develop, update and strengthen disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures at all levels, in accordance with priority five of the Hyogo Framework for Action, taking into account their own circumstances and capacities and in coordination with relevant actors, as appropriate, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities to continue to support national efforts in this regard;

11. *Encourages* Member States to consider elaborating and presenting to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat their national platforms for disaster reduction in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action, and also encourages States to cooperate with each other to reach this objective;

12. *Stresses* that to increase further the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, particular international cooperation efforts should be undertaken to enhance and broaden further the utilization of national and local capacities and, where appropriate, of regional and subregional capacities for disaster preparedness and response, which may be made available in closer proximity to the site of a disaster, and more efficiently and at lower cost;

13. *Also stresses*, in this context, the importance of strengthening international cooperation, particularly through the effective use of multilateral mechanisms, in the timely provision of humanitarian assistance through all phases of a disaster, from relief and recovery to development, including the provision of adequate resources;

14. *Encourages* all Member States to facilitate, to the extent possible, the transit of emergency humanitarian assistance and development assistance, provided in the context of international efforts, including in the phase from relief to development, in full accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the annex therein, and in full respect of the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law;

15. *Recognizes* the goals and purposes for which the Central Register of Disaster Management Capacities was established following the adoption of resolution 46/182, takes note with concern of the findings of the independent review

of the Register carried out in 2009, and requests the Secretary-General to provide recommendations on possible measures to address those findings, including on the structure and format of the Register;

16. *Reaffirms* the role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat as the focal point within the overall United Nations system for advocacy for and coordination of humanitarian assistance among United Nations humanitarian organizations and other humanitarian partners;

17. *Welcomes*, so as to increase further the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, the incorporation of experts from developing countries that are prone to natural disasters into the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system, and the work of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group in assisting such countries in strengthening urban search and rescue capacities and establishing mechanisms for improving their coordination of national and international response in the field, and recalls in this regard its resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 entitled "Strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of international urban search and rescue assistance";

18. *Urges* Member States, the United Nations system and other humanitarian actors to consider the specific and differentiated consequences of natural disasters both in rural and urban areas, when designing and implementing disaster risk reduction, preparedness, humanitarian assistance and early recovery strategies, giving special emphasis to addressing the needs of those living in rural and urban poor areas prone to natural disasters;

19. *Recognizes* that information and telecommunication technology can play an important role in disaster response, encourages Member States to develop emergency response telecommunication capacities, and encourages the international community to assist the efforts of developing countries in this area, where needed, including in the recovery phase;

20. *Encourages* States that have not acceded to or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations,[6] to consider doing so;

21. *Encourages* the further use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies, including as provided by UN-SPIDER, as well as the sharing of geographical data, for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, where appropriate, and invites Member States to continue to provide their support to the consolidation of the United Nations capability in the area of satellite-derived geographical information for early warning, preparedness, response and early recovery;

22. *Encourages* Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and international financial institutions to enhance the global capacity for sustainable post-disaster recovery in areas such as coordination with traditional and non-traditional partners, identification and dissemination of lessons learned, development of common tools and mechanisms for recovery needs assessment, strategy development and programming, and incorporation of risk reduction into all recovery processes, and welcomes the ongoing efforts to this end;

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2296, No. 40906.

23. *Encourages* Member States and the United Nations system to support national initiatives that address the possible differentiated impacts of natural disasters on the affected population, including through the collection and analysis of data disaggregated, inter alia, by sex, age and disability, using, inter alia, the existing information provided by States;

24. *Stresses* the importance of the full and equal participation of women in decision-making and of gender mainstreaming in developing and implementing disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery strategies, and in this regard notes the recommendations of the International Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Beijing from 20 to 22 April 2009;

25. *Encourages* Member States and relevant regional and international organizations to identify and improve the dissemination of best practices for improving disaster preparedness, response and early recovery and to scale up successful local initiatives, as appropriate;

26. *Requests* the United Nations system to improve its coordination of disaster recovery efforts, from relief to development, inter alia, by strengthening institutional, coordination and strategic planning efforts in disaster recovery, in support of national authorities;

27. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations humanitarian and development organizations to continue efforts to ensure continuity and predictability in their response and to further improve coordination in recovery processes in support of the efforts of national authorities;

28. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and other humanitarian actors to improve the dissemination of tools and services to support enhanced disaster risk reduction;

29. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations humanitarian and development organizations, in consultation with Member States, to strengthen tools and mechanisms to ensure that early recovery needs and support are integrated into the planning and implementation of disaster preparedness, humanitarian response and development cooperation activities, as appropriate;

30. *Acknowledges* that early recovery should receive further funding, and encourages the provision of timely, flexible and predictable funding for early recovery, including through established humanitarian instruments;

31. *Encourages* the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian and development actors to support humanitarian coordinators and resident coordinators, in order to strengthen their capacity, inter alia, to support the host Government in implementing preparedness measures and to coordinate preparedness activities of country teams in support of national efforts, and also encourages the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian actors to further strengthen the ability to quickly and flexibly deploy humanitarian professionals to support Governments and country teams in the immediate aftermath of a disaster;

32. *Emphasizes* the need to mobilize adequate, flexible and sustainable resources for recovery, preparedness and disaster risk reduction activities in order to ensure predictable and timely access to resources for humanitarian assistance in emergencies resulting from disasters associated with natural hazards;

33. *Welcomes* the achievements of the Central Emergency Response Fund and its contribution to the promotion and enhancement of early humanitarian response, calls upon all Member States and invites the private sector and all

concerned individuals and institutions to consider increasing voluntary contributions to the Fund, including, when possible, through multi-year and early commitments, and emphasizes that contributions should be additional to current commitments to humanitarian programming and not to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development;

34. *Invites* Member States, the private sector and all concerned individuals and institutions to consider voluntary contributions to other humanitarian funding mechanisms;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, and to include in his report recommendations on how to improve actions for identifying and addressing the gaps from relief to development, within the United Nations system and at the national level, including in the area of durable and sustainable solutions, particularly in rehabilitation and reconstruction.

69th plenary meeting
22 January 2010